The Government has put in place various policies to promote broad based industrial growth. This includes, *inter-alia*, delicensing of industrial capacity, liberalization of foreign trade regime to provide better access to inputs at competitive prices, rationalization and reduction in duty rates of customs and central excise, better infrastructure support, and liberal FDI regime, etc.

Government has announced several relief measures for export oriented industries, which includes enhancement of the Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB), reduction in Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) premium by 10% enhancement of the rates of duty drawback, interest subvention of preshipment and post-shipment credit, refund of service tax, raising the revenue ceiling for Vishesh Krishi and Gram Udyog Yojana.

In the Budget 2008-09, the Government has proposed reduction in excise duty across the board from 16% to 14% to boost the domestic demand for the manufacturing industry. In addition, the Government has also proposed reduction in excise duty from 16% to 12% in the Budget 2008-09 for Small Cars, Motorcycles, and Scooters etc. to give boost to the domestic consumer durable manufacturing industry.

The Government has since approved a proposal to create Information Technology Investment Regions (ITIRs). These ITIRs would be endowed with excellent infrastructure and supported through investor-friendly policies. With a view to improve the competitiveness of Indian industries, particularly, the micro, small and medium enterprises, the Government has also approved a proposal to set Mini Tool rooms in the country under Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode, in co-operation with State Governments/Industries/Associations/ Companies/NGOs/Individuals.

Lifting of ban on non-basmati rice

2514. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the request of farmers to lift the ban on non-basmati rice, which is mostly grown in Andhra Pradesh to around 40 lakh tonnes per year and being exported from Kakinada port in the last few years to around 3.20 lakhs;

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken by Government in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Non-basmati exports have been banned in order to control the rise in the price of domestically available rice.

Extension of anti-dumping duty on raw silk

2515. SHRI SAYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the request of sericulture farmers to extend the